

year in exports. The processors and vessel owners rely on these temporary workers who are Japanese technicians specifically trained to the standards required for Alaska Ikuro products to be sold in the Japanese market. Their skills are not otherwise available in the Alaska or U.S. labor pool and they are not taking work from U.S. workers. My state relies on these workers and I believe the H-2B visa program is vital to the survival and economic growth of the fishing industry in Alaska. The potential for lost revenue in Alaska is extremely high if the industry does not have these skilled technicians to aid with the processing.

This is a serious matter that requires immediate legislative action. I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives for their support and urge them to swiftly pass this emergency legislation, which directly affects the economy in many of our districts.

### JOB LOSSES IN THE U.S. TIED TO HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN CHINA

#### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 30, 2004*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to call my colleagues' attention to an important development in our country's approach to trade. For years, businesses have recognized that markets only work when the rules are applied fairly to everyone. Corporations have pushed our government to enforce international trade law governing intellectual property, state subsidies, and pricing, because violations of these international rules hurt American businesses and American workers.

Now, for the first time, workers themselves have filed a petition, arguing that systematic abuse of workers' rights in China have displaced hundreds of thousands of American jobs. This historic petition filed by the AFL-CIO describes how the Chinese labor system artificially lowers wages and brutally represses its workers, and therefore constitutes an unfair trade practice under Section 301(d) of the Trade Act because it "burdens or restricts U.S. commerce."

I commend to my colleagues the following opinion piece from Harold Meyerson, who notes correctly that this petition could result in our trade law finally being applied to the benefit of workers as well as shareholders. In addition, the unabashedly free-trade editorial page of the Washington Post wrote that the "administration should agree to consider [the AFL-CIO's] petition." Simply put: it is not protectionist to argue that free markets and a free economy cannot be based on human-rights abuses.

For too long, American trade policy has failed to promote even minimum labor standards. The International Labor Organization's core labor standards simply articulate basic political freedoms, such as the freedom to associate, the abolition of forced labor, and the elimination of the worst forms of child labor. Unfortunately, the Bush administration has failed to include even these internationally-recognized standards as a framework for trade negotiations. Yet the ILO's report on Central America confirms that none of the CAFTA

countries is in compliance with basic standards of health and safety or freedom of association.

If free trade is going to improve the quality of life for Americans without putting downward pressure on labor standards internationally, we must ensure that every country is playing by the same rules. I urge my colleagues to read the attached articles.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 17, 2004]

#### CHINA'S WORKERS—AND OURS

(By Harold Meyerson)

Until 10 a.m. yesterday, U.S. trade law belonged to big business. Corporations routinely petitioned our government to threaten other countries with sanctions if their products were being knocked off or undersold by foreign manufacturers with state subsidies, and our government frequently complied. The solicitude the Bush White House and its predecessors showed for shareholders, however, was nowhere in evidence for workers. Profits depressed by unfair trade practices were an official object of concern; wages and employment levels depressed by unfair trade practices were none of the government's business.

This double standard was the heart of modern trade policy. Yesterday morning, that began to change. For the first time ever, the AFL-CIO filed the kind of unfair-trade petition that corporations commonly file, alleging that China's repression of workers' rights has displaced at minimum 727,000 U.S. jobs, and calling on the President to threaten China with tariffs until it stops artificially lowering its workers' wages.

The idea that our trade statutes protect American workers from competition with repressed workforces overseas will surprise just about everybody, but in fact, these laws were enacted by Congress in the 1980s and signed by Ronald Reagan. For the past 15 years, unions have taken no action under the laws, because the U.S. job losses were hard to quantify.

Over the past year, however, Mark Barenberg, a Columbia University law professor, and Mark Levinson, chief economist for UNITE (the clothing and textile union), concluded that changes in the global economy were so huge that such a calculation was now possible—and necessary. In particular, there was the loss of nearly 3 million U.S. manufacturing jobs over the past 3 years, the concurrent explosion of Chinese manufacturing, the ballooning of the U.S. trade deficit with China and the abundant if largely ignored documentation of China's semi-Stalinist labor system. All these things combined to make a trade-law appeal on behalf of U.S. workers eminently plausible.

The 103-page AFL-CIO petition runs through an array of statistical analyses to come up with its figure of 727,000 displaced American manufacturing jobs. But its foremost achievement may be to encapsulate the vast literature that describes the part-feudal, part-communist labor system in which Chinese peasants must labor when they go to work in China's export-sector factories. Under China's hukou system of household registration, citizens must live and work in the place where they are permanently registered, normally their place of birth. Every household is designated as rural or urban, a distinction on which a caste system has been erected.

Urban workers are free to apply for and leave jobs; they are entitled to state housing and pensions. Rural workers, however, need state permission to seek work in towns and factories. Once employed, they enter a bonded-labor arrangement in which they cannot quit unless they can pay their employer an amount plainly beyond their means. The

hukou system forbids them to compete with urban workers for higher paying jobs, and migrant workers without jobs are subject to arrest by the state's public security bureau.

By state design, then, these workers have no power to affect their conditions of work. Though productivity in China has skyrocketed, they are routinely paid rural-level subsistence wages—as little as 15 to 30 cents an hour—when they are paid at all. Employers tend to recruit childless, young, single women, whom they pack into cement-block dormitories to which the women are commonly restricted when they're not on the factory floor. They cannot leave. They organize at the peril of imprisonment or torture.

China has 160 million workers in manufacturing and mining, nearly 12 times the U.S. total. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates that 20 million peasants will enter the urban workforce every year for the next 20 years. This is, make no mistake, the planet's proletariat—and it in no way resembles the kind of free labor force we take for granted in the United States. Those U.S.-based corporations that invest in Chinese factories—a long list headed by Wal-Mart—owe some nice chunk of their profits to a workforce toiling, to resurrect a line from Mao, under "the barrel of a gun."

Critics will doubtless call the AFL-CIO "protectionist" for filing this petition. And if it's protectionist to demand that millions of Chinese women have the right to leave their jobs and apply for better ones, or to unionize their workplace or be allowed at least one day off a year, if it's protectionist to demand that U.S. workers not lose their jobs because they cannot work as cheaply as these repressed Chinese workers, then the AFL-CIO should absolutely plead guilty. What I'd like to hear from the critics—and from George W. Bush—is why they're protecting the deal between U.S. corporations and China's neo-Stalinist state to extract profits from them both at the expense of tens of millions of desperate young women.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 22, 2004]

#### TRADE AND LABOR RIGHTS

The Ethical basis of free markets is that they reflect free, individual choices. Workers may be paid little, but if they sign up for jobs voluntarily, then those jobs must be the best options available. Removing those jobs, for example, by closing factories on the grounds that they are "sweatshops," will make workers' lives worse. But what if the workers' choices are not free—what if workers are locked up in factory dormitories and brutalized when they protest? In that case capitalism has lost its ethical foundation. Capitalism may remain a wonderful engine of economic growth, and growth in the long term tends to bring freedom. But in the meantime it will not be just.

This is why the trade complaint against China, filed by the AFL-CIO last week, deserves qualified sympathy. China's police state abuses workers, who sometimes go unpaid and then get beaten up when they demand what is owed to them; it has punished labor leaders with harsh prison sentences handed down after fake trials. The AFL-CIO is right that such treatment violates the principle that free economics should be rooted in free politics. If the effect of the petition is to goad the U.S. government into protesting human-rights abuses in China, it will be constructive.

But the unions' ambitions go beyond that. Their petition demands that the Bush administration punish China with trade sanctions, arguing that Chinese abuses drive down wages and increase the competitive pressure on American workers. In fact, ending abuses in China would not save many

American jobs. China has 800 million people living in the countryside, where underemployment afflicts one in three workers; for these people, wages of \$2 a day represent an attractive income. Market forces, not denial of workers' rights, are overwhelmingly the main reason for China's low wages.

Still, China's abusive labor practices are abhorrent, so one can agree with the unions' objective without accepting their supporting argument. The question is whether trade sanctions are the right way to help Chinese workers. Sanctions can sometimes work, especially if their aim is to extract specific concessions: that certain prisoners be released, for example, or that a particular labor practice be stopped. The unions' demand is that China set up an administrative system to enforce labor rights throughout its vast manufacturing sector. That might prove more than the communist regime can stomach, in which case the trade sanctions would disrupt trade without improving labor rights—retarding the economic progress that may bring political freedom in the long run.

The Bush administration must decide whether to consider the petition and what sanctions if any to apply. If it accepted the idea of imposing trade penalties on China, the Chinese would likely appeal to the World Trade Organization's arbitration panel, and the appeal might well be successful, forcing the United States to lift its sanctions. If, on the other hand, the panel sided with the United States, the WTO would for the first time have imposed on its members a duty to protect labor standards.

Would this be a good thing? Yes, provided that these labor standards governed basic political freedoms rather than mandating minimum wages or even minimum standards of safety. Imposing economic regulation on poor countries would harm poor workers by destroying their jobs. But even if the new standards were reasonable, they might cause a backlash from developing countries, which regard external imposition of labor standards as protectionism in disguise. If developing countries withdrew from the WTO as a consequence, trade would be disrupted, and workers would suffer once again.

In short, if trade is used as a lever to promote a revolution in international labor rights, the lever will break. Still, the unions are pursuing a good cause, and the administration should agree to consider their petition. Here's a small proposal: To allay poor countries' fears of disguised protectionism, the United States should couple measured promotion of labor rights with bigger cuts in U.S. tariffs on products such as textiles and sugar. That would displease some U.S. unions and businesses, but it would further the interests of the world's poorest workers.

HONORING AND CONGRATULATING  
MR. THOMAS M. McDERMOTT

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 30, 2004*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and honor that I congratulate Mr. Thomas M. McDermott on his retirement from the Northwest Indiana Forum. Tom has spent the past 11 years dedicating his life to the promotion of economic development and growth in Northwest Indiana. His career as President and CEO of the Northwest Indiana Forum has allowed him the opportunity to touch the lives of many people. In honor of his gracious service to his community, there will

be a celebration of his accomplishments on March 31 at the Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, Indiana.

Tom McDermott has accomplished many visionary goals throughout his career. Before joining the Forum in 1992, Tom served as Mayor of the City of Hammond for nine years. Prior to that, Mr. McDermott served as Circulation Director of The Times and as Suburban Circulation Director for the Chicago Sun Times. Tom has also ventured into the newspaper and radio business, serving at one time as owner of WIMS Radio in Michigan City, WXRJ in Crown Point, WJOB in Hammond, WCGO in Chicago Heights, Illinois, WABT in Kane County, Illinois, and WZVN in Merrillville.

Not only has Tom had many positive accomplishments throughout his career, he has also actively contributed to his community through participation in various programs aimed at improving opportunities for the people of Northwest Indiana. He has been a powerful member of the Board of the Fund for American Studies, the Lake Area United Way, Hoosier Boys Town, Boy Scouts of the Calumet Council, Lake Point Children's Discovery Center, Chancellor's Advisory Board at Purdue North Central, Partnership for a Drug Free Lake County, Northwest Indiana Urban League, Trade Winds Board, Welfare Reform Council, Campagna Academy Board, and the Northwest Indiana Quality of Life Board. In addition, Tom has addressed educators and community leaders in London on partnership programs to encourage excellence in education, and was chosen by the American Council of Young Political Leaders to represent the United States in Australia and Norway.

Along with his many other accomplishments, Tom has received numerous community service and leadership awards, including "Business Person of the Year" from the Hammond Chamber of Commerce. Other awards include: Lake County Economic Opportunity Council Service Award, Greater Hammond Community Services "Man of the Year" award, and the American Business Women's Association "Boss of the Year" award.

Mr. Speaker, Tom McDermott has given his time and efforts selflessly to the people of Northwest Indiana throughout his years of service. He has taught every member of his staff the true meaning of service to all members of the Northwest Indiana community. I respectfully ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Mr. Tom McDermott for his outstanding contributions to Indiana's First Congressional District. I am proud to commend him for his lifetime of service and dedication.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO RUSSELL  
HINDMARSH

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 30, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Russell Hindmarsh for the contributions he has made to his Dolores community and the State of Colorado. Recently, Russell was chosen as Cattleman of the Year for his lifelong commitment to the cattle industry. It is with great sat-

isfaction that I congratulate Russell for this well-deserved honor, and thank him for his contributions to his community and state.

A veteran of the Korean War, Russell began working in the livestock industry at a young age, and learned to ranch sheep and cattle from his father. As his career in the industry progressed, he has focused his attention to raising cattle. Russell's involvement in the ranching community of Colorado includes having served on the advisory boards for the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, serving on the Southwest Livestock Association board, and serving on the Montezuma Woolgrowers board. He also is a former member of the Colorado Woolgrowers, the National Woolgrowers, the Colorado Cattlemen, and the National Cattlemen.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Russell Hindmarsh has a legacy of strong commitment to the cattle industry in the Dolores community and the State of Colorado. Russell's efforts to keep this great tradition of ranching vibrant is worthy of recognition before this body of Congress and this nation today. It is my privilege to extend to Russell my sincere congratulations on being named Cattleman of the Year for 2004, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS I. "BUTCH"  
HODGKINS

**HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 30, 2004*

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to a man with a truly distinguished public service career. For nearly four decades, Francis I. "Butch" Hodgkins has served Sacramento County with great class and distinction. Butch will soon retire from his current position as the Executive Director of the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. As his friends, family and colleagues gather to celebrate Butch's illustrious career, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in saluting this outstanding citizen of Sacramento.

Butch received his Associate of Science degree from Sacramento City College and then moved on to California State University, Sacramento for a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering. In 1965, Butch began his four-decade long career with the County of Sacramento, Department of Public Works. From 1972 until 1988, he worked for Public Works Division of Sacramento County that dealt with the sewer system.

In March of 1989, Butch was appointed Deputy Director of the Department of Public Works for Sacramento County. During his tenure at this position, he served as the project and construction engineer for a \$100 million wastewater construction program. In addition, as Chief of the Division, he was responsible for a \$50 million per year regional wastewater project.

In September 1991, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors assigned Butch to the City and County Office of Water Planning. In his capacity as a Liaison for the City and County Office of Water Planning, Butch was charged with the formidable task of formulating an area-wide plan to provide safe and reliable water supply in such a manner which